



For Immediate Release
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Tools for downtowns get boost by House committee

LANSING – The House of Representatives Committee on Land Use passed two bills Wednesday designed to revitalize downtowns across Michigan and create job opportunities, announced state Sen. Jason Allen, R-Traverse City.

“The economic hearts of our communities are in our downtowns,” Allen said. “Cities and villages across the state need additional tools at their disposal to enhance the existing programs that encourage growth and economic development.”

Senate Bill 1201 would allow two Downtown Development Authorities to have one board overseeing their operations. Since business corridors do not necessarily end at a municipal boundary, additional flexibility is needed for DDAs to work together.

Designed to allow municipalities to designate a historical neighborhood tax increment authority, SB 1202 would help communities eliminate the causes of deterioration, and promote residential and economic growth within a historic district.

Initiated by Sen. Allen, the package of bills called CORE – Creating Opportunities for Renewed Economies – are geared toward expanding and coordinating many state economic programs to operate more effectively, as well as provide incentives for growth in cities and villages.

The package is designed to help communities revitalize, improve and create incentives for their central business and residential districts, initiate new growth and create job opportunities.

Other legislation included in the CORE package would:

- Establish a “Commerce Center” as a city, village or large urban township to address the needs of Michigan’s economic hubs;
- Provide incentives for city or village residents to offer additional housing for renters and office space options; and
- Expand the obsolete property act to include commercial buildings, which will encourage mixed-use developments.

“Getting these bills one step closer to being enacted is a step in the right direction,” Allen said. “Senate Republicans are dedicated to helping all Michigan communities prosper and thrive through the creation of job growth and economic prosperity,” Allen said.